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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

THE CREATION AND EVOLUTION OF INTROUCTORY COURSES IN WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAMS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

PROGRAM IN WOMEN'S STUDIES AND GENDER STUDIES

BY

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CHICAGO, IL

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THE CREATION AND EVOLUTION OF INTROUCTORY COURSES IN WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAMS

Introduction

The goal of this study is to understand what affects knowledge production in introductory women's studies courses at different historical moments. I analyze two different programs looking at how their history and evolution has influenced their introductory course content. As the first, and for some, only women's studies class, the introductory course creates a foundational knowledge that students take into future WGS courses and courses in other disciplines. This creates a need for these courses to be both accessible and complex with their classroom objectives. I critically analyze the courses' inclusion of material covering intersecting oppressions and how this focus has evolved in response to larger factors within the programs and universities. In other words, I am looking at what knowledge WGS introductory courses seek to produce and how this has changed over time.

Intellectual Rationale

My research agenda seeks to complement the work of Kelly Coogan-Gehr; in *The Geopolitics of the Cold War: Narratives of Inclusion* (2011) she uses archival research to analyze how the first ten years of academic journal *Signs* shaped WGS programs. Putting her research findings in conversation with other historical narratives of WGS, such as Marilyn Boxer's *When Women Ask the Questions* (1998), she complicates the taken for granted explanation that WGS programs were created out of the progressive movements of the 1960s. She challenges scholars

to see a more complex WGS origin story that hinges on alternative political and economic explanations.

Coogan-Gehr (2011) concludes her book with a call to action (of sorts), stating, “In a sense, then, this book offers an invitation and possible lines of inquiry to other feminist scholars interested in expanding academic feminism’s history beyond the new social movements of the 1960s and the New Left” (p. 32). I accept her invitation to continue this inquiry in search of a deeper understanding of the origins and evolution of WGS programs. While she focused on an academic journal and I focus on curriculum, our shared objective of positing a more comprehensive account of the creation and evolution of WGS programs paired with our shared method of situating our findings in an accurate historical context creates an important connection between our work. Despite the different subject matters, I entered this study with a similar goal: to understand which extra-disciplinary forces have influenced the field of gender studies.

The significance of this research is its focus on how program objectives translate to curricula, specifically within introductory courses, in addition to its critique of the material being offered in an attempt to challenge current programs to establish more inclusive and progressive classroom objectives, if necessary. My research question is: What knowledge is being produced in introductory WGS courses and how has this changed over time? To answer this question, I looked at the priorities of professors, the objectives of programs, the process of institutionalization, the agendas attached to research funds, and the materials being used. To find these answers, I used archival data including a 40-year span of syllabi and committee meeting notes, program and course proposals, and professional correspondence.

Much of the existing research regarding WGS programs is outdated and overdetermined

regarding the national history of WGS. A limited amount of this research analyzes specific programs, and none focus on introductory courses. By looking at the construction and formulation of WGS programs, I sought to understand the process of creating and growing a progressive discipline. By focusing on one specific area of WGS programming—introductory courses—I attempt to deconstruct the traditional narrative and offer a more complex understanding of knowledge production in WGS curricula. As someone who has spent a large quantity of time in the archives, I have already gathered a substantial amount the research needed for this project. Additionally, through this process, I have gained advanced knowledge regarding the historical context of specific gender studies programs. I believe this prepared me to be fully capable of pursuing this research agenda.

Methods and Limitations

This study focuses on two separate WGS programs: Loyola University Chicago (LUC) and University of Illinois Chicago (UIC). As one of the first WGS programs in the nation, UIC has a rich history to explore; as the first WGS program in a Catholic Jesuit institution, LUC also has a vibrant past worth investigating. As a large, state research university, located near downtown Chicago, UIC has a distinct academic environment than LUC, which is a smaller, private Catholic university, located in far north Chicago. Both programs are local and have extensive archival documentation which make them ideal subjects for my research.

My research relies on a critical discourse analysis of a span of 40 years of archival documents. I first explored the archival records of the programs, critically analyzing meeting minutes, annual reports, documented correspondence, program proposals and evaluations, and syllabi. I then examined how each program has evolved over the past 40 years, noting important

shifts in goals and objectives, curriculum, and relationships with both students and administration. I also examined changes made to the curriculum, specifically the required readings on syllabi, looking for patterns in the types of scholarship assigned. Critical discourse analysis requires looking beyond what is being said to understand why it is being said. In order to do this, I paid close attention to the sources of funding, the oversight of the university, and the personal goals of the program committees.

The origins of discourse analysis can be traced back to the works of many scholars including Aristotle, Marx, and Foucault and has recently been adapted by feminist researchers. Nancy Naples (2003) uses feminist epistemology to include the dynamics of race, gender, and class in discourse analysis. Discourse analysis has been used in a multitude of disciplines and in a variety of ways. For my research I used critical discourse analysis.

Teun A. van Dijk's (1993) "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis" provides a clear and concise explanation of what critical discourse analysis is and why it is an important form of research. Dijk writes, "Critical discourse analysts want to know what structures, strategies or other properties of text, talk, verbal interaction or communicative events play a role in these modes of reproduction [of dominance]" (p. 250). The main component that sets critical discourse analysis apart from other forms of discourse analysis is its commitment to being political and actively seeking to disrupt power structures by exposing them. My location within WGS as both a student and a scholar-in-training affects my perspective and objectives as a researcher. I believe feminist research is inherently political, whether expressed or not; therefore, I embraced the sociopolitical stance of the feminist epistemology I am approaching this research with. Critical discourse analysis seeks to understand the power dynamics of discourse by uncovering

connections between social inequality and discourse production. Critically analyzing the historical records of WGS programs helped create a better understanding of what social dimensions, such as neoliberalism, capitalism, institutionalization, and university politics, are influencing the discourse in the curriculum.

The Creation of Initial Women's Studies Programs

As a pioneer of the academic women's movement, San Diego State created the first Women's Studies Program (WSP) in 1969. By 1976 over 270 programs were in existence and over 15,000 courses were being taught at 1,500 different institutions in the United States (Boxer, 1998). But these programs did not just appear: they took years of hard work and pressure from students, faculty, and community activists. In addition to the relentless work of these feminist scholars, the recent changes within academia provided fertile ground for these programs to flourish. After decades of declining enrollment of women students, which had previously peaked in the 1920s, the number of women entering college began to grow again in the 1970s. In addition to student growth, masses of women began climbing the ranks of academia as professors and administrators (Howe, 1976). This influx of women on campus resulted in waves of activists willing to fight for WSP courses and successful enrollment numbers when these courses finally came to be. Many women were re-entry students that relied heavily on the community found in WSP courses to assist with the transition back into academia after years away.

Moreover, around the same time, the Ford Foundation began funding programs focused on ending sex discrimination, including in higher education. Mariam Chamberlain, sometimes referred to as the "godmother" of WSP, served as the link between the foundation and blooming WSPs. As the foundation's higher education program officer, she had control over the financial

resources these programs were in need of. By 1981, the foundation gave over $4 million in grants to WSPs (Chamberlain, 2000). The Ford Foundation is also credited with providing the initial funding for the creation of the National Women's Studies Association, as well as the well-known feminist academic journal *Signs*. The funds provided by the Ford Foundation were vital to the creation and sustainability of WSP during their first decade.

Due to the rapid growth of WSP, Florence Howe began a federally funded study of WSP curriculum and programs (Howe, 1976). In the seven years since the initial program began, the profound evolution of WSP had scarcely been studied or documented. Before beginning this study, Howe had led two preceding studies of WSP. In 1971, when the original programs were all still in their early stages of formation, Howe received a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities to examine this development. A few years later, using a grant from the Ford Foundation, Howe and The Feminist Press she surveyed every United States college and compiled a complete listing of all WSP courses and programs in existence (Howe, 1976). With her resources limited to the expertise she gained from these studies, Howe sought to understand the changing program goals and curriculum by analyzing fifteen programs across the United States.

In "Seven Years Later: Women's Studies Programs in 1976" (1976) Howe reports a strategic transformation in the common goals held by majority of the WSP community. The original shared purposes were to question the universal male-centered curriculum, to add courses about women to the curriculum, and to establish women as a valid focus in academia. While these remained foundational, Howe found that WSP continued to adjust to their fast growth and by 1976 had more dynamic goals, including: to transform the understanding and inclusion of

women in traditional disciplines and to develop new interdisciplinary WSP courses. The study also revealed that only programs with access to adequate funding were able to succeed, which resulted in Howe concluding the report with a recommendation that the federal government provide the necessary financial assistance to developing WSPs.

In the beginning, a majority of WSPs agreed upon staying both political and interdisciplinary. A majority of the founding mothers worried that reaching departmental status would isolate WSP from other disciplines, therefore they strove to be embedded in multiple disciplines by relying on them for continued support due to lack of departmental resources (Boxer, 1998). Along with this worry, many early feminist scholars were anxious about becoming depoliticized due to university pressures to conform. While many saw the institutionalization of WSP as a success, others feared the consequences would be greater than the benefits. Many feminists rightfully questioned if academic rigor would overshadow political intentions. These concerns were valid; according to Howe's (1976) "Seven Years Later" report, WSP courses were taught in an extremely rigorous manner, to the point where many students refused to take the class due to the risk of receiving a low grade. WSP had to prove their worth and necessity and having intense workloads in courses was one way of doing that.

Two years after Howe's (1976) "Seven Years Later" report, *Women's Studies Int. Quarterly* published a report on WSP collaboration in Michigan—"Women's Studies Curriculum Development: A View from the United States" by Mary Edwards (1978). Similar to Howe's, the report discussed the shared views among WSP scholars including their shared dissatisfaction with the limits of their home disciplines and their general distrust of the common individualistic and competitive nature of academia. Their experiences led them to envision a program based on

collective work and reliable collaboration including team-teaching courses and jointly creating the curriculum and program structure. Building on these values, WSP scholars in Michigan decided to join forces and work collectively to solve their principle concern—a lack of quality materials to include in their WSP curriculum development.

In 1976, University of Michigan received funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities to facilitate a collaboration of WSP scholars in the region. Both graduate students and faculty at universities in Michigan began meeting on a weekly basis; these meetings often included guest speakers from across the country presenting on WSP scholarship. Once relationships were built and foundational understandings of WSP scholarship were universal, the Michigan scholars divided into four task forces, each assigned a different course to develop. The courses they created served as a valuable resource for blossoming WSP in the area. The collective work served as a unifying force resulting in shared program objectives across the region (Edwards, 1978).

The conformity of the initial WSPs as discussed by Howe and Edwards began to disperse as individual programs gained stability within their universities. In a study of early-adopter WSPs, Christine Wood (2015) found that while a majority of the programs were created with the same goals of adding the voice of women to already developed curriculum and creating new curriculum focused on women, after a few years these programs refined their focus and individualized their purpose. These changes were dependent on what Wood (2015) calls "knowledge ecologies" which consists of available resources, institutional environment, department stability, faculty interest, and inter-departmental relationships.

Eventually, many programs abandoned their initial desire to avoid departmental status,

finding that they needed the resources and recognition of being considered a discipline (Boxer, 1998). This led to an increase in reliance on institutional structures in attempt to establish themselves as credible sources of knowledge. In her "Women's Studies in the United States: A Report to the Ford Foundation", Catherine Stimpson (1986) talks about the difficult work of political goals and academic stability coexisting throughout the process of institutionalization. Ultimately, her report found that WSPs had exceeded initial goals and secured a spot in academia for the foreseeable future; she attributes this success to working with, rather than against, institutions of power such as the university and foundations.

On the contrary, in a groundbreaking essay, Wendy Brown (2008) claims that institutionalization created an impossible environment for WSP to succeed and called for feminist scholars to reconsider their position in universities. In the same collection of essays, Biddy Martin (2008) mirrors this sentiment, stating that institutionalization has led to the loss of WSP "critical and intellectual vigor" (p. 170). The consequences of institutionalization have been a topic of discussion between feminist scholars for decades and a consensus has yet to be reached.

The Creation of UIC's WSP

In January of 1972, correspondence between the Circle Women's Union and Sandra Bartky expressed initial interest in the creation of a women's studies program (WSP) at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) and included a complied list of courses already in existence related to women—the list included a range from six courses (Fall 1972) to sixteen courses (Winter 1973) and included courses from anthropology, English, history, political science, psychology, sociology and social work (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 5). Women interested

in the possibility of a WSP at UIC created an unofficial committee and volunteered their time and energy to both develop and advocate for the implementation of a comprehensive WSP at the university. The creation of a three-quarter course sequence covering introductory WSP material, first offered during the 1973-74 school year, served as their first achievement.

Next, they created a five-point proposal for the creation of an official WSP. Each of the five points listed included complex and unique components the committee wished to have as part of the program. The first focused on the importance of a comprehensive and interdisciplinary curriculum; the second called for the creation of a special program to provide resources such as counselling and tutoring for women, both on campus and off. The third point describes the desire to have a program focused on community outreach including a resource center to provide a variety of services most needed by women in the community; the services mentioned included providing information about local legislation and updates on the ERA, a library, personal growth groups, and a daycare center. The fourth point called for the creation of a women's research institute with adequate staff and funds. The fifth and final point stated that "the opportunity to learn in conditions which are favorable to the development of our autonomy" was an important objective (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 6). Altogether, these five points created an impressive blueprint for a program idealized by the committee; they sought to have a program capable of providing resources, serving as a research hub, and giving back to the community, in addition to having a strong and diverse curriculum.

After completing the proposal, the committee wrote an open letter to UIC faculty, staff, and students seeking their support for the creation of a WSP. They begin the letter by stating, "There is an urgent need for a WSP at UICC. The undergraduate program as it now stands, fails

to meet many of the needs of its female students. A central fact of our existence—the fact that we are women—is ignored in most standard courses, treated in a cursory way or presented through the distorting lens of sexist bias" (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 6). The letter insists that implementing a WSP will help the university further the progress on two of its goals: the development of interdisciplinary programs and the promise to meet the academic needs of the community it serves. In response to the letter, hundreds signed the petition in support of the program. Despite evidence of strong support, the proposal sat in limbo for months.

In December of 1973, the committee wrote a letter to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) following up on the proposal. In the letter, the committee proposed a "practical program for immediate implementation" (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 6) that consisted of fewer demands and more streamlined program objectives. In this letter, the committee asked for Women's Studies to be recognized as a program so the three introductory courses can be labeled as WS courses and other courses relating to women can be cross listed as WS courses. They state, "We are seeking to establish an interdisciplinary program in Women's Studies, not an undergraduate major or a separate department" (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 6), making it clear that they do not have intentions to create a discipline, rather to serve as a corrective interdisciplinary program with relations across campus. The letter asks for a small budget of $2,000 for the first year with an increase to $12,000 the next year. Lastly, it requests the ability to work with both the campus counselling services and the library's Midwest Women's Historical Collection. They end the letter stating, "We believe that our proposal to [UIC] provides an inexpensive, practical first step for [UIC] to adopt a popular program vital to its urban institutional mission and exceptionally useful to [UIC] students" (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 6). Six months after submitting

the abbreviated proposal, LAS finally approved the WS Program May 30th, 1974 (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 9). With this approval, the WS committee became an official entity of LAS tasked with fully developing the program.

The Creation of LUC's WSP

Just after the publication of the Michigan report (1976), a handful of faculty members at Loyola University Chicago decided to bring the trend to their campus. The program began with the hard work of Suzanne Gossett, Judith Wittner, and Randa Dubnick. The process of creating the program consisted of gathering opinions and suggestions of other faculty members, reaching out to established programs across the country, and referring to current scholarship; they relied heavily on the findings in both Howe's and Edwards' reports. They held a workshop featuring three local speakers to educate Loyola faculty members about other Women's Studies programs. Additionally, the fifty faculty members who attended the workshop had the opportunity to offer their opinions and suggestions on the objectives of the potential program as well as what courses should be offered. Following the workshop, the trio used grant money from the Mellon Foundation to continue with their planning. Over the summer of 1978 they reached out to 180 programs asking for their advice, curricula, and program objectives (LUC WOST Box 1, Folder 5).

The committee created a thirty-page proposal outlining their objectives and plans for the program. Clearly drawing on the findings of Howe's and Edwards' reports, the proposal mirrors the priorities of a majority of the other WSP studied. As justification for the program, the proposal lists preprofessional training and personal growth as beneficial for students and university-wide curriculum advancement as the projected outcome (LUC WOST Box 1, Folder

5). Ultimately, the program strove to both supplement and correct the existing curriculum in the university by encouraging departments to reanalyze their current material.

In the early years of the program, Gossett stated, “Women's Studies is our remaking of the traditional curriculum of the university. It is a product of women asking new questions and demanding that the academic curriculum reflect the reality of their lives, their history, and their aspirations” (LUC WOST Box 1, Folder 12). The committee decided to create a minor reliant on cross-listed courses with the purpose of requiring all programs to assess the flaws in their courses regarding historical understanding, literary interpretations, and societal impacts of material on women to meet the cross-listing standards. Seeking to create a new interest in feminist knowledge production at Loyola University Chicago, the committee designed the program to target the mainstream curriculum of undergraduate education with the intent of infiltrating it with new knowledge regarding women’s experiences.

In the fall of 1978, the committee held its first meeting and submitted its program proposal, which included the course proposal for Introduction to Women's Studies. During that academic year the minor received approval, the introductory course came into formation, and the committee avidly publicized the program (LUC WOST Box 1, Folder 5).

Summary of UIC’s and LUC’s Program Creations

While UIC and LUC followed similar paths in the creation of their programs, there are a few differences worth noting. LUC did not start discussing a WSP until four years after UIC; however, status wise, its approval only came a year after UIC’s approval for a minor. UIC’s initial focus revolved around their introductory course sequence which began before their program received official approval. Three years later, in 1977, UIC’s WSP finally began offering

a minor. On the other hand, LUC sought approval for their program, their introductory course, and a minor all at once. For LUC, they received approval for all three initiatives in 1978, just two years after their initial conversations regarding a WSP began. Throughout the proposal process the two programs differed as well: UIC's WSP committee wrote up their proposal and then distributed it among faculty asking for support. LUC did the reverse: the WSP held a workshop for LUC faculty that included visiting scholars to educate the faculty and ended with the collection of opinions and concerns regarding the creation of a program at LUC. The program proposal came into being only after the committee discussed their findings regarding faculty members' opinions. The different processes used are evident in the proposals—LUC's is generic enough to be accepted by the numerous people involved in the planning process, whereas UIC's reflects the narrower political and social goals of the committee members. This becomes a core difference between the two programs.

The Political Decisions of WSP

Donna Haraway (1988) confirmed what many WSP scholars were thinking during the creation of their programs: that all courses have biased, political, or personal value when she claimed, "So, not so perversely, objectivity turns out to be about particular and specific embodiment and definitely not about the false vision promising transcendence of all limits and responsibility" (p. 583). Likewise, Sandra Harding (1992) added, "The problem with the conventional conception of objectivity is not that it is too rigorous or too "objectifying," as some have argued, but that it is not rigorous or objectifying enough; it is too weak to accomplish even the goals for which it has been deigned, let alone the more difficult projects called for by feminisms and other new social movements" (p. 440). Women's studies courses were not the only ones with underlying

objectives and agendas; all courses are created and taught from a situated place.

In a recent study on employment-discrimination law, Deborah Dinner (2017) uncovered the parallels between the neoliberal agenda and anti-discrimination rhetoric. She found that neoliberalism influenced both the creation and implementation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits employment discrimination. She stated, "Because Title VII and neoliberalism are both rooted in the American liberal tradition, they share common, animating values. Their values include individualism, efficiency, and negative rights" (Dinner, 2019, p. 1069). Dinner argued, "the advent of sex-discrimination law helped to facilitate the neoliberal restructuring of employment" (Dinner, 2019, p. 1084). While sex-discrimination rhetoric appeared to be progressive on the surface, it often times was used as a means to further neoliberal policies. The repeated mention of anti-discrimination in committee meeting notes and proposals could suggest the unintentional influences of neoliberalism on the development of the program objectives.

Susan Watkins (2018) furthered this idea: "The hold exercised by the anti-discrimination approach over US feminism was based on tangible results. […] These victories owed much to liberal-establishment support—above all, to the wealth and expertise of the corporate-philanthropic foundations that funded the institutionalization of anti-discrimination feminism from the 70s on" (Watkins, 2018, p. 21). The Ford Foundation, in particular, funded multiple feminist organizations that shared their anti-discrimination goals (Watkins, 2018 p. 22). These same foundations were responsible for institutionalizing the US feminist movement and funding the development of feminist scholarship for WSP.

According to Dinner's and Watkins' studies, these principles fall in line with the

neoliberal agenda of the time. The content of the anti-discrimination policies that followed in the wake of Title VII were based on the understanding that discriminatory practices hurt economic growth: from this point of view, anti-discrimination rhetoric could be spun to gain support for neoliberal agendas. Watkins (2018) wrote:

> The upshot would install the anti-discrimination approach as the hegemonic form of feminist politics, while the 'mainstream' in which it sought to integrate women was itself reshaped by Friedmanite neoliberal policies in response to the long economic downturn. […] In the belief that its support could, as [The Ford Foundation's] president McGeorge Bundy explained to Congress, encourage young organizations towards responsible, constructive projects and guide them away from the paths of disruption and discord; 'making the world safe for capitalism', as Bundy sardonically put it elsewhere. This meant channeling radical energies towards legalist projects within the anti-discrimination framework. (p. 21)

By using anti-discrimination language, it appears the committee had been influenced by this campaign to funnel resources and energy into an agenda with neoliberal foundations. However, as both Watkins and Dinner clearly state, WSPs' relationships to neoliberal foundations are often based heavily on financial necessity, rather than free will.

Political Direction of UIC's WSP

While the UIC program received approval from LAS in 1974, the WS committee struggled to secure recognition from the administration for years following. In 1976, the committee reported that they had not been informed of an available grant until after the application deadline. A year later, the committee wrote a letter of complaint to admissions for leaving their program out of the pamphlet for prospective students. In 1978, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Cantor, expressed his support for the program but warned the committee that the LAS Dean did not support WS and suggested the committee move the program to a different college on campus, such as business or Jane Addams (UIC WS Box 2, Folder 22). A

few months later, Johnson—Cantor's replacement—suggested his desire to create not only one, but three permanent faculty lines in WS. This left the committee hopeful of having administrative support. A committee meeting minutes reported, "Perhaps, he, having gained Cantor's power wished to become the godfather of WS, a role which eluded Cantor during his reign" (UIC WS Box 2, Folder 22). However, this sentence is crossed out, without any notes as to why. A few months later, the committee noted that LAS had failed to invite the WSP to college-wide meetings. The next year, the committee expressed concern about the Student-Designed Curriculum Committee's reluctance to approve WS major proposals (UIC WS Box 2, Folder 31).

The committee also faced an ongoing struggle with the administration's financial decisions and the resulting budget complications. They spent a majority of their first few years of existence discussing how to survive with such a small amount of money. In 1978, the administration mentioned annualizing a functional budget for the program, to reduce the amount of time spent discussing and asking for money (UIC WS Box 2, Folder 22). However, this did not stabilize the budget as the committee assumed it would. In 1981, budget cuts threated one of the program's three salaries and 15% of their already miniscule operating budget. Notification of these budget cuts came only a year after LAS's Dean Hadley had promised the new WS Director, Peg Strobel, that the program had and would continue to have support from the administration. To justify the cuts, the administration claimed the program required too much money; however, they had not done an official program review or even conversed with the WS committee regarding the program's financial records (UIC WS Box 3, Folder 37).

While the committee believed they could survive with the operating budget cut, they

could not manage to lose one of the few people paid for their work in the program (UIC WS Box 3, Folder 42). They created a committee to brainstorm ways to save the salaried position, and the program overall. The committee organized speak-outs and published articles in the Chicago Sun-Times and the Chicago Tribune; they managed to create enough noise to pressure the administration to further look into the program's needs before formally cutting the position (UIC WS Box 3, Folder 44). It took the program over three years to secure a salary for all three of their positions—director, assistant director, and administrative assistant.

Despite their complicated relationship with the administration, the WSC did not hesitate to take political stances both on and off campus. One of the committee's original concerns, campus security, continued as a priority for years. In 1976, they wrote a letter welcoming Chancellor Riddle to campus and used it as an opportunity to discuss the multiple rapes that had happened on campus and the need for better security measures. By 1980, they were unhappy with the slow improvement to campus security. The committee decided to send a representative to the Senate Council to discuss these safety concerns. Within a year of their decision to increase their pressure on the administration to improve campus security, the committee succeeded. As of January 1981, IDs became required to enter campus buildings on off hours; additionally, campus security began offering an escort service for students feeling unsafe on their way home at night.

Sexist language in university publications served as another priority for the committee in regard to their on-campus activism. They repeatedly reached out to administration regarding sexism and sexist language in university publications—primarily talking about class descriptions designating certain courses as specifically for men.

The committee did not hesitate to be active in local politics—they were both vocal and

public about their opinions on politics affecting women in their community. They wrote an open letter to the Illinois Senate regarding the loss of abortion benefits to UIC employees, while actively encouraging the governor to appoint a women's advocate (UIC WS Box 2, Folder 22). The committee publicly supported Planned Parenthood and invited them to speak on campus at one point. Upset by a local news channel's decision to cancel controversial screenings, the committee joined protests demanding the channel to broaden their screen offerings.

On a national scale, the committee advocated for both national abortion rights and the ratification of the ERA. They handed out flyers educating people on the dangers of anti-abortion legislation and participated in ERA marches and rallies. As a committee, they made the decision to boycott all states which had not yet ratified the ERA (UIC WS Box 2, Folder 22). This effected their ability to support, endorse, and participate in certain conferences depending on their location. Additionally, the program co-sponsored both a socialist-feminist conference and a Marxist-humanist conference (UIC WS Box 5, Folder 65). They were hesitant about these conferences, but ultimately, they unanimously decided to pursue both.

While the committee had been continually working on improving the program, they understood that they still had a lot of room to grow. In the fall of 1983, they created a list of their ongoing goals which included four commitments: involving student participation in program planning, remaining an active part of the women's movement, integrating women of color into syllabi, and dealing with racism and classism both within the program and the women's movement (UIC WS BOX 5, Folder 65). While these commitments appear to be progressive and inclusive, one committee member wrote a letter of complaint about the program in 1986. Her main complaint revolved around the lack of attention given to students, referring specifically to

when students enter the WS office only to be ignored or treated poorly. The letter additionally complained about the uncomfortable power dynamics both within the classrooms and the committee meetings. Lastly, the member expressed great concern over the courses being too political, as if the program were trying to convert students to socialism or Marxism (UIC WS Box 5, Folder 65). So, while many committee members prided themselves on the strong political roots of their program, it is evident that not everyone agreed. And, while students had been a priority since the creation of the program, by 1986 many student issues were still being unaddressed.

Political Direction of LUC's WSP

While developing the program during its first year of existence, the committee decided to address the political direction of program. In order to create the standards for selecting courses to cross-list as well as foundations for the construction of the introductory course, the program needed to have a firm understanding of its political goals. Many suggested linking the program back to the women's movement because they were aware of the inherently political leanings attached to women's studies. These ideas were furthered by stating the need of the program to be a social critique, but not necessarily confrontational or threatening in manner. Wittner concluded the conversation by pointing out that no course is value-free (LUC WOST Box 1, Folder 12).

However, the committee did not fully agree, and Loyola's WSP attempted to avoid becoming political, as illustrated in their vague and overgeneralized list of principles for the program. The first, "We believe that the place of women in human history and the contributions of women in the arts have been underestimated, and that these contributions are worth finding, studying, and teaching" and second, 'We believe that both men and women can and should

educate themselves through the study of women, as women have always studied men" (LUC WOST Box 1, Folder 12). These principles answer Wittner's comment about no education being value-free. Wittner's perspective reflects the analysis of objectivity found in Harding and Haraway's work. As they note, education has traditionally been taught by men and about men, adding women into the mix does not rid it of objectivity, because objectivity never existed in the context of being value-free. These principles show the committee's commitment to adding women into already established curriculum as well as creating new courses focused on women, but they fall short of offering a political leaning regarding their desire for women to be more appreciated within academia.

The third principle, "We believe that women and men are inherently equal and that no person should be discriminated against on the basis of sex" is similar to the fourth, "We believe that sexist stereotypes and sexist language should be avoided, and that it is incumbent upon universities to set an example in this regard," (LUC WOST Box 1, Folder 12). These principles encompass much of what the Women's Studies program stands for—according to proposals, committee meeting minutes, annual reports, and course descriptions—anti-sexism is a major commitment of the program. This further illustrates the committee's failure to encompass other dynamics of oppression, and, as I argue below, is most likely limited by neoliberal values.

The last principle was slightly better than the previous two. It stated, "We believe that historically women have been oppressed, and have not had an opportunity to utilize their talents or to fulfill themselves personally. We believe that women need active encouragement to overcome the results of this oppression, and that a Women's Studies program is part of this encouragement" (LUC WOST Box 1, Folder 12). This principle clearly focuses on overcoming

oppression, rather than on anti-discrimination rhetoric. However, it is still weak due to its attempt to discuss oppression through a single-axis framework when it is a multi-axis issue. The committee addresses only sex and fails to consider the other dynamics of oppression such as race and sexuality.

The list is purposefully vague, I believe, to ensure all committee members agree completely with each principle. Due to this generalization of beliefs, the list fails to include controversial topics within the women's movement and ultimately remains limited in its reach. The archives of *The Loyola Phoenix*, a student run newspaper, show topics such as racism, homophobia, abortion, and body image were important controversial issues to the students during this time. Many letters to the editor were sent debating the morality of abortion and same-sex relationships as well as many complaints by students of color about lack of support within the university. Multiple letters shaming women for having sex, wearing too little clothing, and being overweight also appeared throughout the late 1970s (*The Loyola Phoenix,* University Archives). By remaining politically neutral in their agenda, the WSP committee failed to address the issues most important to students.

These principles serve as the foundation of the program and both its strengths and weaknesses can be traced back to them. As mentioned above, there are many weaknesses to these principles including language usage, avoidance of controversy, and inability to expand past a single-axis framework of sexism. These weaknesses created a divide between the direction of program and its political roots in the feminist movement. However, these principles did help gain a larger faculty following and more support within the university, which secured the program a place in the academy.

Summary of Political WSP Directions

Both programs began with honest intentions rooted in the feminist movement, but their level of political involvement began to differ not long after the formation of their committees. The pressures of institutionalization served as a larger influence on the LUC's program creation than feminism did. The committee avoided being politically controversial in order to secure acceptance into the university. Being politically neutral did aid in the program proposal process, but also created limitations in the drafting of the program's objectives. These objectives served as a foundational statement for the program and by being politically vague, they created a space of neoliberal ideology to influence the program as a whole.

UIC's committee had conversations regarding similar concerns over the institutional consequences of being too political within the university. However, they ended up embracing their political objectives and refused to let institutional pressures depoliticize their program proposal and objectives. This decision led to the influence of socialism and Marxism on the program's courses and commitments. The consequences of the differing political goals of the two programs can be seen through years of committee decisions and curricula creation. However, the political decisions do not appear to have had any noticeable influence over the funding available to each program nor the positionality and security of the programs within their institutions—which were the original concerns of both committees.

Racial Considerations in WSP

Racism has been an issue within WSP since the origins of the programs. Many programs have failed to include any experiences of women of color and others have fallen into the trap of tokenizing specific women of color. In Howe's "Seven Years Later" (1976) report, she found

that curriculum in WSPs relied heavily on the work of white, middle-class women. Of the four recommendations she offered, creating material on women of color was her most developed suggestion. She listed seven areas where material did not exist in current curriculums: Hispanic Women, Black Women, Native American Women, Asian-American Women, Appalachian Women, Multiethnic/Multiracial Texts. In regard to Black Women, she mentions recent anthologies but highlights the lack of materials covering the intellectual history of black women. She explains the Multiethnic/Multiracial text as a necessary way for white women to learn about multiple minority women within a single text (Howe, 1976). Her concern was that the curriculum did not include a range of experiences or identities.

UIC's Consideration of Race

Over the years, the committee discussed several options for guest speakers. These options were versatile and included women of color such as Alice Walker, Beverly Smith and Audre Lorde; the poet Adrienne Rich; and the feminist authors Joan Scott and Gerda Lerner (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 17, Box 2, Folder 22). They suggested bringing the vice president of United Farm Works Union to campus, as well as Robin Morgan and Rita Mae Brown (UIC WS Box 2, Folder 31). In addition to their well-rounded speaker suggestions, the committee carefully crafted relationships with a variety of community organizations and participated in a multitude of events such as the Chicago Area African Studies Seminar and at YWCA and the Mujeres Latinas en Accion Street Fair. They cosponsored a panel on racism and sexism with the Chicago branch of the National Alliance of Black Feminists, as well as invited the organization to occasional advisory board meetings (UIC WS Box 2, Folder 22). One year, in order to address racism within the committee, the members agreed to read *Yours in Struggle* and

discuss it focusing on racism and anti-Semitism (UIC WS Box 5, Folder 76).

In 1981, the committee decided to create a proposal for a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), a division of the Department of Education, to be able to sponsor a Multicultural Women's Summer Institute. Their original proposal received criticism for being too thin and unexciting; the criticism included concern over the lack of information regarding evidence of interest by minority women and expected participation by minority women, and the failure to specify the ethnic distribution of the planning committee (UIC WS Box 3, Folder 42). The committee reworked the proposal to address these concerns and resubmitted it. Upon successfully receiving the grant, the committee began discussing the institute in more depth. One conversation of concern revolved around the inclusion of Jewish women and ultimately the committee decided not to include Jewish women due to speculation that other minority women would object. This decision did not receive support from every member of the committee, but those who objected were told they should have spoken up in the proposal stage because it was too late to rework the proposed institute (UIC WS Box 4, Folder 51). The topic of anti-Semitism joined one of the conversations about racism within the institute's planned discussions, as a way to acknowledge the prejudice Jewish women face.

The institute took place during the summer of 1983 and consisted of twenty women, the majority of whom were college professors, and focused on examining issues in the lives of women of color living in the United States (UIC WS Box 5, Folder 65). Following the institute, the twenty participants were tasked with creating an activity to serve as a way to disseminate the information they learned over the summer. The two UIC faculty who had participated in the institute decided to create a women of color resource directory and host a one-day workshop to

share their new knowledge. A few years later, FIPSE awarded the program another grant to fund the production and dissemination of teaching packets covering third world women's history (UIC WS Box 6, Folder 105).

LUC's Consideration of Race

With only one course listed as a WSP course and no professors committed solely to the WSP, the committee had few opportunities to interact directly with students. The committee relied on hosting events and speakers to fill this gap. The department hosted a multi-year series focused on women in occupations including: Women and Medicine, Women and the Law, Careers for Women in Psychology, Women and Politics, and Women and Science. Over the first five years, they cosponsored multiple events with Afro-American Studies including: Black Women and the Women's Movement; Women, Family, and Politics in the Black Community; Alice Walker; The Double-Blind: Racism and Sexism in Business; Black Women in the Corporate Milieu.

The committee's commitment to the inclusion of black women's experiences and voices appeared to be limited to providing a cash donation in support of events the Afro-American Studies hosted focusing on women. One committee meeting's minutes reported: "As usual, the WSP Committee will give Carol Adams $100 for Black Women in Business" (LUC WOST Box 1, Folder 7). Willing to offer money and support, but not emotional or physical labor, the committee prided themselves on cosponsoring events about women of color without devoting their time and energy to these events. As illustrated thus far, Loyola's WSP exemplifies Nash's analysis. Carol Adams from the Afro-American Studies program served as the token black woman used to educate and advance the inclusivity of the WSP.

Race in UIC's and LUC's WSP

While neither program began as fully inclusive, both attempted to make strides toward racial inclusivity as they grew. LUC did this by providing monetary support to cosponsor events with Afro-American Studies. UIC also sponsored and cosponsored multiple events focused on women of color. UIC also continually addressed racial issues and discussed ways to further their understanding and ability to teach from a racially inclusive perspective. They sought to not only improve their own teaching in regard to race and culture, but to provide the training and resources for other WSPs to advance their teaching too. UIC set a high standard for how WSP should approach and include women of color in their curriculum and programming. LUC made slow changes to include race within their curriculum, but it never became a priority.

Overview of the Creation of WSP Curricula

According to an analysis by Marilyn Boxer (1998), WSP courses took forms similar to feminist conscious-raising groups: students and professors typically sat in a circle with an open discussion. In the beginning, these classes were more political than most on campus and included self-reflection components that students had never experienced before. Professors took a step back and let students lead discussion. WSP courses were thus learning experiences for both the professors and students. This teaching style would later become known as feminist pedagogy and be present in classes outside of WSP.

Turning a standard discipline-based course into a WSP course required a lot more work than simply adding women and stirring. In her historical study of the first two decades of WSP, Boxer details the complexity of transforming curriculum to align with the goals of WSP. Traditional courses needed to be deconstructed and rebuilt from the foundations because, as

Boxer (1998) states, “adding the new scholarship on women to existing stores of knowledge would necessarily require fundamental change in the assumptions, interpretations, and structures that shape intellectual domains” (p. 58). New questions, new methods, new ways of analysis, and new thought-processes were required to challenge the status quo of disciplinary knowledge.

Looking across time and at the current status of WSPs, curriculum development has been unique to a majority of programs depending on available resources and the specialization of the professors. However, a few trends are common across the board. Feminist theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist methodologies are discussed to some extent in the majority of WSP (Boxer, 1998). These concepts have become foundations to WSP curriculum and continue to evolve with the everchanging feminist scholarship being produced in WSP.

Creation of UIC’s Introductory Course Sequence

Following the implementation of the program, the committee wrote a letter to the Dean of LAS explaining their introductory course sequence with the hope of gaining funding for the courses. The letter explained that the three-course introductory sequence had been taught under the title C 299 and all class instruction happened on a volunteer basis relying on teachers, guest lecturers, and students to assist with the course without compensation. The courses had large enrollment numbers, ranging from 40 to 75 students per course, and relied on a combination of large lecture and small group discussion sections. The small group discussion sections relied on graduate students to be the discussion leaders; in the past the graduate students served on a volunteer basis, but the committee felt it necessary to reimburse them for their time going forward. Therefore, the committee asked the Dean for the funding of one full-time teaching assistantship to be divided among the multiple students guiding discussions (UIC WS Box 1,

Folder 9). Written with caution, the letter did not ask for more than what the committee saw as the bare minimum funding they needed to continue with the course; it did not even ask for compensation for the teachers, just the students. The committee understood from the beginning that the success of their program relied on appearing inexpensive to the university and actively sought to keep their costs low until they had a stable standing.

At the end of the academic year, the committee wrote a follow up letter to the Dean. In it they stated, "We were successful in introducing students to current issues in women's studies, to methods of research and investigation in various subject areas and to much current scholarship concerning women in those academic disciplines, such as history, which we study" (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 10). They mention their emphasis on helping the students connect the course material to both their own academic disciplines and their personal experiences. The committee highlights the versatility in their teaching methods, explaining their reliance on a mixture of lectures, panel discussions, a variety of guest speakers, films, tapes, and slide shows. The letter ends by reinforcing the importance of having students lead the discussion sections and it expresses gratitude for being able to pay two students to do so. The committee writes, "These discussion groups made possible lively and animated exchange of ideas among our students and contributed to the kind of atmosphere which leads to genuine intellectual growth" (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 10). In this letter, the committee makes it clear to the Dean that the ability to teach the introductory courses in an unconventional way is a vital part of the WS learning experience.

The first course in the sequence, American Woman Today (WS 151), taught for the first time in Fall 1973, focused on the experiences of contemporary American women. The original course description states, "This first course will focus on the situation of the American woman

today and will be collectively taught by at least six faculty members and teaching assistants from different academic backgrounds" (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 6). Focused on creating an interdisciplinary foundational knowledge about WS, the course featured scholars from a multitude of disciplines and community members from various backgrounds. Units taught in the original course offering included sex roles development, women and children, Freud and the mental health of women, healthcare and gynecology, sexuality, the meaning of sexual relationships, the family as an institution, motherhood and its alternatives, women and work, history of the women's movement, and political theory. Assigned readings included excerpts from *Sisterhood is Powerful; Women's Estate; Women in Sexist Society; Our Bodies, Our Selves; The Black Woman; The Second Sex;* and *The Feminine Mystique*. Over the first few years, the course objectives did not change; a few readings were replaced but the overall structure remained similar to its original form. In 1977, the assigned texts still included *Sisterhood is Powerful; Women's Estate; Our Bodies, Our Selves;* but replaced some of the original texts with *Tell Me a Riddle, Black-Eyed Susans,* and the *Lesbian Reader.* The slightly altered units included: socialization and psychology, language and media, black women, healthcare and rape, lesbian women, and capitalism and the nuclear family. And, in 1978, a unit on minority women replaced the unit focusing on black women.

The second course of the sequence, Women in History, Literature and Art (WS 152), followed a similar structure--focusing on providing introductory level material on topics relevant to women, but with a narrower focus on history, art, and literature. The units taught in the original offering included: an introduction to women's history and culture, history of the family and the effects of industrialization, abolition and feminism, social and cultural history of the 20th

century, women in politics and revolution, women in literature, women in art, women in film, and women's novels and autobiographies. The original assigned books included *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath, *Herstory* by June Sochen, *Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings* by Miriam Schneir, and *By a Woman Writ* by Joan Goulianos. Within a couple years the assigned readings completely changed to include *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings; Women and Fiction; Growing up Female in America; Witches, Midwives, and Nurses;* and Women in *Modern America—A Brief History*. While the overall course objectives did not change, some of the units shifted in focus; women in theatre, women's music and women's poetry were added, and slavery and black women freedom fighters replaced the abolition and feminism unit.

The final course of the sequence, Women in Other Cultures (WS 153), briefly covered a lot of diverse topics including primate behavior; socio-biology and genetics; matriarchy; third world women and imperialism; women in Africa; black women in the United States; women in Latin America; Latina women in the United States; lesbian culture; women in Europe; women in white ethnic groups in the United States; women and child care in China; science fiction and utopias; and political solutions. The course's reading list included *Woman Warrior; Fragment from a Lost Diary; Women on the Edge of Time; The Longest Revolution; Women of the Forest;* and *Women, Culture and Society.* By 1979, the course units were condensed—the updated syllabus included units on nature vs nurture; third world women; women in non-industrial societies; women in Latin America; women in Africa; Native American women; women under socialism; matriarchy; and political solutions.

In 1976, two WS committee members decided to write a book proposal for an introductory WS textbook due to their inability to find an adequate one. In their proposal they

wrote, “In our experience teaching introductory courses, we have found that it is necessary to use eight to ten different books for any given course. It is an enormous task to pull all of this material together into one coherent course without a clear definition of the various point of view and theories out of which WS materials come” (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 11). They also stated, “There is no single book which sorts through the huge and ever-growing amount of material in the field. There is no book which synthesizes and focuses the basic tenets of WS” (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 11). The outline of the book included seven chapters, each of which would include a brief bibliography of selective titles necessary to complete the course readings, and would be around 300 pages long. Additionally, they planned to include suggested films, slide shows, and projects to compliment the book material. While the book never materialized, the proposal offers an insightful look at what the committee saw as important to an introductory WS course.

Explaining the first chapter, the proposal (UIC WS Box 1, Folder 11) stated:

> In our introductory chapter we would ask the question “What is WS?” Our answer would point out that WS is a corrective, supplementary and visionary discipline. As a corrective discipline it seeks to explore the various attitudes expressed about women in various cultures and eras by historians, anthropologists, writers, psychologists, medical men, husbands, lovers and bosses. In examining where and how these attitudes developed and how they affected women’s lives, we can begin to study ways in which women can begin to redefine themselves and actually correct misconceptions and male definition of a “women’s place.”

This first chapter focuses on breaking down the definition and purpose of women’s studies into manageable pieces that can be easily understood without oversimplifying the complexity of the ideas. Their goal is not only to educate students of gender misconceptions, but to give students the skills needed to correct these misconceptions and redefine gender on their own terms.

The remaining chapters were outlined to focus on women in psychology, women in history, women’s culture, the women’s movement, and collectively teaching in feminist

classrooms. Their insistence on creating a guide on collectively teaching illustrates how important they found collectively teaching within their own classroom. While feminist pedagogy had yet to be a common concept at this time, many of their teaching methods illuminated the same values. Additionally, their focus on both women in academic disciplines as well as the history of feminism shows that they wanted students to understand women's issues both in and out of academia.

Creation of LUC's Introductory Course

Taking the program principles, as well as a multitude of suggestions into account, the introductory course slowly came together. The committee planned the course as a team-taught endeavor that would rely on guest lecturers throughout the semester. In order to provide consistency, the course would always begin with two foundational units: "Why Women's Studies?" and "The New Methodology of Women's Studies." The remainder of the course would rotate slightly depending on the professors' and guest lecturers' specialties. Some examples offered were the feminine perspective; coming of age in cross-cultural perspectives; women, work, and family; the mythology of womanhood; history of feminism; and women and the arts.

The Introduction to Women's Studies course started out successfully with an enrollment of eighteen students when first offered in spring of 1980. The original course description read:

> This course will introduce students to the exciting new scholarship on women. The early part of the course will emphasize history, scholarly research, and stereotypes in the media and contemporary social roles. These analytical skills will then be applied to topics in the social sciences such as the origin of the family, the mother role, and women's political participation. The Women's Studies perspective on the humanities will be explored through short stories, literary criticism, and discussion of women as artists and authors. In the last section of the course, the focus will be on the contribution of Women's Studies to contemporary issues such as women in the work force and changing family roles. Within the context of each section—social sciences, humanities, and current issues—students will have the opportunity to relate the new scholarship on women to their own major field

or career interest. (LUC WOST Box 7, Folder 10)

Encouraging students to consider the representation of women, or lack thereof, in their academic disciplines served as a guiding purpose for the introductory course. With a focus on women writers, particularly fiction writers, the course sought to illustrate the importance and variety of women's work. The course did not explicitly challenge the university for excluding women's scholarship, but rather attempted to infiltrate the curriculum by giving students the skills to question male-centered courses. Ultimately, the course strove to encourage women's success by highlighting the work and lives of prominent women.

The original course included readings from Betty Friedan, Kate Chopin, Willa Cather, Joyce Carol Oates, and Tillie Olsen—all white, American women. The course focused on the white woman's experience in society, with the goal of incorporating women's accomplishments into the academy. Betty Friedan focused on encouraging white middle-class women to enter the workforce, ignoring the multitude of working-class women already working fulltime. Kate Chopin and Joyce Carol Oates were known for their fictional stories that portrayed women in a distinctive fashion, Chopin writing openly about sexuality and Carol Oates portraying violence. Both Willa Cather and Tillie Olsen were writers with ties to Nebraska, one a child of Russian immigrants, and the other known for her depictions of life on the Great Plains frontier; both were raised in working-class families. While these authors provided a variety of experiences for women, they failed to include the works of any U.S. women of color or international women. While all inspirational women, none are known for their radical attempts to challenge the patriarchal, capitalist, heteronormative system.

The following year, the course altered slightly for its second offering and only enrolled

nine students. Whereas the original course description said it wanted to provide an opportunity for women to see themselves in scholarship, the description for the second year advanced this objective by saying it wanted to "present critiques of the norm or alternatives to it" (LUC WOST Box 7, Folder 12) regarding traditional scholarship on women. The slightly altered description also states the course's two main goals as illustrating the complexity and ever-changing role of women's lives, as well as using this learning experience to help expand the vision of women's possibilities (LUC WOST Box 7, Folder 12). Organized to follow the chronology of women's lives, the course included topics such as girlhood; education; adolescence; identity formation; courtship; marriage decisions; motherhood; family structures; working women; social and political roles; and aging. The course also covered roots of feminism and basic concepts of women's physiology. Three textbooks were required: *Women: A Feminist Perspective, Women in Sexist Society,* and *The Experience of the American Woman*.

Ultimately, the topics mentioned in the syllabus and the main objectives of the three assigned books create a clear understanding of the direction of the course. Not changing much from the first year, the course's second year focused on the experiences and representation of mostly white women. Thus far the course has aligned with the vague and uncontroversial program principles; the course objectives challenge social norms but do not question the structure of the patriarchal system held up by neoliberal economics.

The course's third year, spring of 1982, attracted fewer than nine students. The course description offers a simplified explanation compared to the previous two, stating, "Introduction to Women's Studies is designed to examine the role of gender in past and present societies. Drawing on recent scholarship in many disciplines, readings for the course represent both

literature and the social sciences. Contemporary issues concerning the importance of gender differences will be of interest to both men and women" (LUC WOST Box 7, Folder 10). The slight language difference in this course description serves as an important milestone for the program. "Designed to examine the role of gender" and "concerning the importance of gender differences" (1982) has replaced "the focus will be on the contribution of Women's Studies to contemporary issues such as women in the work force and changing family roles" (1980). By altering the course language to use *gender* rather than *wome*n, the program begins to challenge the essentialism created by relying on a universal understanding of women.

Summary of UIC's and LUC's Introductory Course Creation

UIC's main focus started with the creation of their multi-part introductory course. They created this course and began offering it before they submitted a program proposal and years before they began offering a minor. LUC, on the other hand, created their introductory course in conjunction with their program and minor proposals—the proposals were written and submitted jointly, complimenting each other. The difference in timing mirrors the difference in priority between the two programs. UIC both began with and prioritized their introductory course sequence, while LUC saw it as an interlocking part of their overarching goal of being a program that could offer a minor, if not a major, in WS.

While both programs spent large amounts of their time and resources on their introductory course offerings, it is evident that UIC put more effort into their sequence. UIC's course required multiple professors, graduate students, and guest lectures for all three sections of the course. LUC's committee created their course to also be team-taught, but with a more manageable goal of having two professors and additional guest lecturers. Both programs

designed their introductory classrooms to be discussion based and feminist in practice. In order to insure this, UIC required students to participate in weekly discussion groups led by graduate students.

As for course content, both programs had similar ideas of what should be taught in introductory WSP courses. They both sought to focus on building an interdisciplinary knowledge of the foundations of WSP that could be used to question and evaluate the students' home disciplines. This required them to cover a lot of topics in a short amount of time, especially for LUC's program. Many units focused briefly on women writers, women in science, women in business, women in psychology, and women in the workforce as a way to show how WSP were important to traditional disciplines. Additionally, both programs covered the women's movement and women's lives—women in the home, women and family, and women in society. In addition to covering these basic concepts, UIC also covers women in other cultures in their sequence's third course—a concept overlooked in LUC's initial introductory course offering.

Changes to WSP Curriculum

In 1986, Catherine Stimpson found that the intellectual goals of WSP had advanced from simply learning about women to creating feminist theory. Curricula began to rely on theoretical discussions of gender differences in society, policies, and philosophies. These lessons covered feminization of poverty; victimization; pay equity; perceived differences based on gender, age, race, and class; and changing gender relations.

Wendy Brown (2008) talks about her experience on a WSP committee, stating, "In our curriculum revision meetings, we found ourselves completely stumped over the question of what a women's studies curriculum should contain" (p. 19). She explains the frustration professors felt

that students were not trained in depth in any one area resulting in an inability to have productive conversations regarding specific area of expertise. The committee struggled with finding a balance between intellectual rigor and coherency in the curriculum (Brown, 2008). This has been a common problem in many WSP because there is not a conclusive idea of what knowledge a WSP student should know by the end of their education. Trying to include a large variety of feminist scholarship, along with a substantial amount of WGS foundational contents, and the necessity of interdisciplinary training that prepares the students to succeed in traditional disciplines created a list of demands too large for any syllabus, let alone an introductory level course. Marilyn Boxer (1998) summarizes the standards many programs used to create or cross-list courses, "Most of the criteria mentioned the extent to which the courses dealt with women, prepared students to identify and analyze stereotypes assumptions and biases about women, incorporated the new feminist scholarship, and employed pedagogy that encouraged "active learning" (p. 35). The reliance on cross-listed courses and professors that have not been specifically trained in WSP means each classroom has a different focus and every student has a different experience in WSP. This reliance has also assisted in the spread of WSP objectives across disciplines because of the pressure put on various professors to tailor their courses to fit the requirements to cross-list with WSP.

Regarding the switch from *women* to *gender*, Marilyn Boxer (1998) writes, "Using gender as a category of analysis has led to the rethinking of the foundations of all knowledge, including women's studies' own foundational paradigms: the social construction of femininity as well as the biological underpinnings of the word woman" (p. 19). Relying on gender as a category not only expanded WGS scholarship, but it also challenged many of the foundational

assumptions rooting WGS in the essentialist understanding of women. Additionally, by referring to gender as the object of study, it creates a space for masculinity studies to be included in the dialogue.

Changes to UIC's Introductory Course Sequence

In 1984, Strobel suggested making changes to the introductory course sequence. She claimed, "for some time I have felt frustrated with the fragmentation in our introductory courses. […] students have reported this feeling in evaluations at times" (UIC WS Box 5, Folder 65). Strobel encouraged the committee to create a subcommittee, consisting of both faculty and students, focused on revamping the course sequence. The subcommittee would then create course outlines for all three classes with selected topics that build on each other and reinforce one another. Ideally, according to Strobel, the course readings could change slightly each year, but the structure would remain mostly intact. Additionally, Strobel felt that having fewer guest speakers would be of benefit to the course structure and the students' learning ability. Regarding the third course in the sequence specifically, Strobel felt it needed to be completely restructured to move away from its method of approaching specific countries and cultures to focusing on international perspectives of common themes such as education, health, religion, and economic exploitation (UIC WS Box 5, Folder 65).

The committee took these suggestions to heart and made a few immediate changes to the introductory sequence. First, they changed the name of the third course from Women in Other Cultures to Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective. Next, they switched the order of the second and third course in order to have International Women's Day as part of the Cross-Cultural Perspective course (UIC WS Box 5, Folder 65). However, the committee did not listen to

Strobel's suggestion to have fewer guest speakers, feeling the collective teaching served as a foundation to the course. A program review in 1989 confirms the committee's trust in having the courses being taught collectively between faculty, students, and guest lecturers.

In regard to the attitudes toward the course sequence, the 1989 program review (UIC WS Box 6, Folder 97) stated:

> Judging from the student and faculty comments during the meetings and interviews, these courses are taught from a feminist perspective and have enthusiastic support from the participating students and faculty. The students commented that they particularly appreciated the instructors' efforts to present the materials from a cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural perspective. Many felt this was their first encounter with such an approach.

In regard to student satisfaction to receiving both academic and experience-based knowledge, the 1989 program review (UIC WS Box 6, Folder 97) claimed:

> The students appear to enjoy the give-and-take open discussion that occurs in the classroom. They believe that it increases their self-confidence, analytic skills, intellectual development and ability to participate in public discussions. Faculty appear to be highly respected. The students we interviewed considered the collective approach to the course planning and teaching, as practiced in this program, superior to more conventional modes of instruction.

According to this review, students appreciated the effort put into having unconventional teaching methods within the introductory sequence. While the courses required the majority of the program's time and resources, the ability to provide a comprehensive education to large numbers of students made the commitment to prioritize the sequence over the past fifteen years worthwhile.

Changes to LUC's Introductory Course

The steady decline of students enrolling for the course in addition to the logistical complications faculty experienced in the execution of the course led the committee to remove

Introduction to Women's Studies from the course listing for the 1982-1983 school year. The committee found the course to be "limited by practical exigencies;" conceived to be a team-taught course supplemented by guest lectures, scheduling issues resulted in the course being taught by one professor and relied on poorly planned guest lectures which rarely aligned with the material being covered. In addition, the committee believed students were hesitant to take a course they did not believe would prepare them for their future education and career goals. The committee believed the course title and content discouraged the average student from enrolling due to their belief of its impracticality for anyone not minoring in Women's Studies.

In an attempt to remedy these misconceptions, the title of the course became Issues in Feminism and the content broadened to encompass more connections to the disciplines and provide an original perspective that would follow the students into their future endeavors. The course still served as an introductory level WGS course but was packaged slightly different to attract more students. After much debate over the format of the course, the committee decided it should be taught by one professor with guest lecturers scheduled to align with the material. The class would be constructed around five central issues dependent on the instructor's preferences and lecturers available. Designed to complement and challenge the content taught in the disciplines, the material sought to bring new viewpoints influenced by feminism to institutional academia. Rather than focusing on the history of women's rights or feminist politics, the course strove to be interdisciplinary and relevant to students from all disciplines.

After much planning, publicizing, and anticipation Issues in Feminism began in the fall semester of 1983. One instructor, twenty-four guest lecturers from sixteen different programs, and twenty students participated in the course for its first offering and the committee deemed it a

success. The issues focused on for the semester included: images of woman in art, literature, theater, and film; perspectives of Black, Hispanic, and Asian women on feminism; women as artists, mothers, writers, workers; women's health; language and sexism; women and... science, the law, religion, politics; and sex roles (LUC WOST Box 7, Folder 10). The restructured course continued to serve as an introductory course to WSP with an interdisciplinary perspective. The inclusion of multiple programs and professors made it possible for the course content to cover a wide variety of information from differing perspectives.

For its second year, the course did not change much. The central issues focused on stayed the same and few changes were made to the guest lecture lineup. The course description for Issues in Feminism in 1984 noted:

> This course is an introduction to Women's Studies, exploring the issues, methodologies and controversies of the field. It is multi-disciplinary, drawing on the work of scholars from various fields. Students will have the special opportunity to hear from many Loyola faculty members who are engaged in research on women. The goal of this semester is to begin to understand the many issues that feminists have struggled to come to grips with over the past century, most especially during the recent wave of feminist scholarship and activism in the United States. This course does not propose to provide single or correct "answers" to the questions that are posed; rather its intent is to increase awareness of the issues and of the different ways that scholars with different perspectives have addressed these issues. (LUC WOST Box 7, Folder 10)

The course description would remain mostly unchanged for the first few years of its offering; it always began by identifying itself as an introduction to WGS, despite the name change. This description shows heavy emphasis on providing a base-level knowledge of WGS as it relates to a multitude of disciplines; it has very similar objectives as the original introductory courses—just slightly expanded and reorganized.

In spring of 1985, a committee discussion over the Issues in Feminism course resulted in Wittner trying to convince the committee to consider a more unified approach with an emphasis

on methods and materials in WGS. Some disagreed, thinking this approach would only work for graduate level classes. The committee decided to wait until the three-year evaluation to settle on any changes. Ultimately, the course went in the opposite direction of Wittner's suggestion; by 1986 it shifts away from describing itself as an introductory course and aligns with its name focusing more on interdisciplinary material.

The course description in 1986 is slightly altered. The description starts with the following statement: "Issues in Feminism explores the issues, methodologies, and controversies of Women's Studies. It is multi-disciplinary, drawing on the work of scholars from various fields" (LUC WOST Box 7, Folder 10). By 1988, the description begins with, "This interdisciplinary course examines a number of issues that relate to women, using as texts feature films and documentary films, literary works by contemporary women writers, and a variety of studies which analyze gender roles in today's world" (LUC WOST Box 8, Folder 1). As Issues in Feminism continues to evolve, the language in the course description progresses from WGS to feminism to gender roles, slowly distancing itself from its original objective of remaining an introduction to WGS.

By this point, the topics mentioned in the syllabi include non-western women, western women, images of women, women's health, minority women in the United States, contemporary feminism, women in the family, law, and science; women as wives and mothers. The course remains rooted in contemporary feminism and focuses on women's place in society but offers a more inclusive understanding of women. Shifting in focus to include a wider array of experiences such as women of color, non-western women, women in various spheres, and complex gender roles, the course appears to have progressed away from the essentialist

perspective of white women. However, following this shift, the course moves further away from the structure of an introductory course and toward the disciplinary leanings of the professor teaching it.

Issues in Feminism began as an introductory course designed to show feminism's impact on multiple disciplines. The course successfully achieved this goal for a few years, but by the 1990s it began working away from the introductory content and focusing more on the home disciplines of the professors teaching the course. Some course focuses included women in communication, feminist philosophers, women in history, women in literature, and women in politics. Eventually, around 2010, the committee changed the title to Contemporary Issues in Women's Studies and Gender Studies to reflect the alternating course objectives.

Summary of Changes Made to UIC's and LUC's Introductory Courses

Around 1983 and 1984, both programs decided their introductory courses needed to be updated and reorganized. Both programs felt they were falling short of their goals for the course, and many blamed the complex course structure for this. After discussion, UIC decided to keep their course as a team-taught endeavor, while LUC decided to simplify their course by having it taught by a single professor. Both decided to keep guest lecturers, but LUC decided to limit and reorganize the guests to better fit their curriculum. The majority of LUC's course changes revolved around being more marketable and applicable to students; their content stayed similar but changed enough to gain interest from more students. Rather than focusing on women's history, the course prioritized relating feminism to academic disciplines and everyday life.

On the contrary, UIC's course changes were inspired by the WSP committee's personal issues with how the course functioned. The program reorganized the course structure and layout

to better accommodate the teaching committee. Additionally, the committee reworked the third course on women in other cultures to center around specific topics from an international perspective rather than having specific units for various cultural areas. This sought to make the material more approachable and intersectional in its analysis of cross-cultural issues.

Conclusion

This study sought to understand the production of knowledge created in introductory to women's studies courses by relying on archival research into the inner workings of the creation and evolution of WSPs. Relying on committee meeting minutes, program proposals, course proposals, course syllabi, and documented correspondence of two WSPs from their creation in the 1970s until 1990, I sought to understand the process of creating and changing introductory courses. While limited by what materials were available in the archives, I believe this study still successfully creates an accurate and well-rounded illustration of how these programs' introductory courses came to be.

Summary of Study

This study found that multiple factors influenced the progression of both the programs and their introductory courses. Both programs faced obstacles when it came to university support including funding, space, and resources. They also both made difficult decisions regarding the political direction of their programs and what that meant for their curriculum. Both programs were started with volunteers and relied heavily on the unpaid labor of the committees who dedicated years to supporting the programs. While both programs faced many of the same challenges, their evolutions were individually paced and directed. The difference in how the programs evolved is evident in the variances in the introductory courses. UIC committed itself to

being both political and racially inclusive, resulting in course content looking progressive, forward-thinking, and at times, controversial. LUC worked to remain politically palatable and created curriculum agreeable to all committee members, as well as the majority of the university, which resulted in a noticeable divergence in their introductory course compared to UIC's. The introductory course content strongly reflected the goals and attitude of the WSP committees.

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VITA

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